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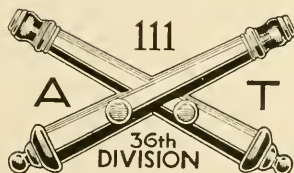


How It Happened and Other Poems

By

Pvt. Edwin H. Underhill

Hq. Motor Bn. 111th Am. Tn.
36th Division



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INTRODUCTION.

For we're the boys of the A. E. F.,
The world has heard its fame.
No matter if it's peace or war
We always play the game.
"Bill" said we couldn't fight,
We came and set him right.
We whipped the Hun,
Our job is done,
So Kaiser Bill, Goodnight!



PREFACE.

This is a history of the 111th Ammunition Train (written entirely in verse) from the time they left Camp Bowie until their return.

I was with the Ammunition Train continually from start to finish and so have been able to give the entire trip accurately, with its many interesting and sometimes perilous adventures.

This book also contains many other poems depicting little incidents of Camp life in France, that every soldier has experienced in the American Expeditionary Forces, which I wrote while in France, in the words and thoughts of the soldiers.

It also contains several illustrations taken by the men, showing points in France that are prominent in the experiences of the Train.

Those who are interested in the 36th Division and the work done by them in France will be interested in this book, as it contains, also, some of the movements of the entire Division.

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DEDICATED TO
LIEUT.-COL. H. E STEPHENSON
COMMANDING OFFICER
OF THE
111TH AMMUNITION TRAIN

Who with a sturdy heart and steady hand
Has piloted our little band,
Through all their travels both on land and sea,
And won respect from his entire command.

And in the coming years, "Après Le Guerre,"
When we again are scattered far and near,
May thoughts of his old Regiment be classed
Among the memories he holds dear.

How It Happened

HOW IT HAPPENED.

It was back in old Camp Bowie,
We signed for our trip to France,
And swapped our old serge breeches
For a pair of khaki pants.

The C. O.* said we were leaving
In a couple of weeks or so,
But the weeks rolled by and the months rolled by
And sti'l we didn't go.

The Battle of Fort Worth dragged along,
The Alhambra† lost its charm,
And finally they gave us furloughs
And sent us back to the farm.

It commenced to look like they didn't need
Our services over in France,
And the 36th Division
Would never be given a chance.

At last an order came one day
For us all to pack our rags;
So we struck our tents and rolled our packs,
And packed our barrack bags.

'Twas a happy bunch that left that day
For the Embarkation Port.
We knew that Hell awaited us,
But the Yank is a dead game sport,

(July 17, 1918)

*C. O.—Commanding Officer.

†Alhambra dance hall.

From town to town, from state to state,
Our troop train sped along,
And the further we went the prouder we were
Of the country to which we belong.

We realized then why the Hun must be stopped
With his bloody, clutching hand,
To save from the curse of slavery
Our beautiful God-given land.

(July 21, 1918)

A week at New York for supplies and a rest,
And a visit to Coney Isle;
A trip to the docks where the transports lay,
And we faced the East with a smile.

(Aug. 1, 1918)

A smile the World has learned to know
Is made in the U. S. A.,
A smile the Huns will never forget
For many and many a day.

The Statue of Liberty waved farewell
As our transports passed that day.
I bet she will turn a backward flip
When we come back home to stay.

And so for twelve long days we sailed
Over the bounding Main.
Some of the days were full of joy,
And some of them full of pain.



CAMP BOWIE.

Many a healthy lunch was lost
In the wake of our noble ship;
And many a man cussed Kaiser Bill,
As his stomach he'd tightly grip.

But after the first few days had passed,
And once more we could eat our beans,
We spent our time in walking the deck,
And looking for submarines.

We didn't have to watch very long.
They came in a flock one day.
A dozen or more of the black-nosed snakes
In the path of our transports lay.

The sound of alarms; the roar of guns;
The jar of the depth-bomb discharge.
A sudden lurch; full-speed ahead,
And the throb of our engines large.

'Twas the first that told us the battle was on,
And we all made a run for the deck.
We thought from the noise and uproar,
Our transport must be a wreck.

But our sturdy old ship was still on the job,
And, as we looked out o'er the rail,
Our greyhound destroyers darted by
With their nose on the submarines trail.

For twenty-four hours we held them at bay,
In that battle on the waves,
And three Al'emand submarines were sent
To a cold and watery grave.

But what of the men of the 36th
While the battle was in full sway?
Did they grow sick and weak from fear
And fall on their knees and pray?

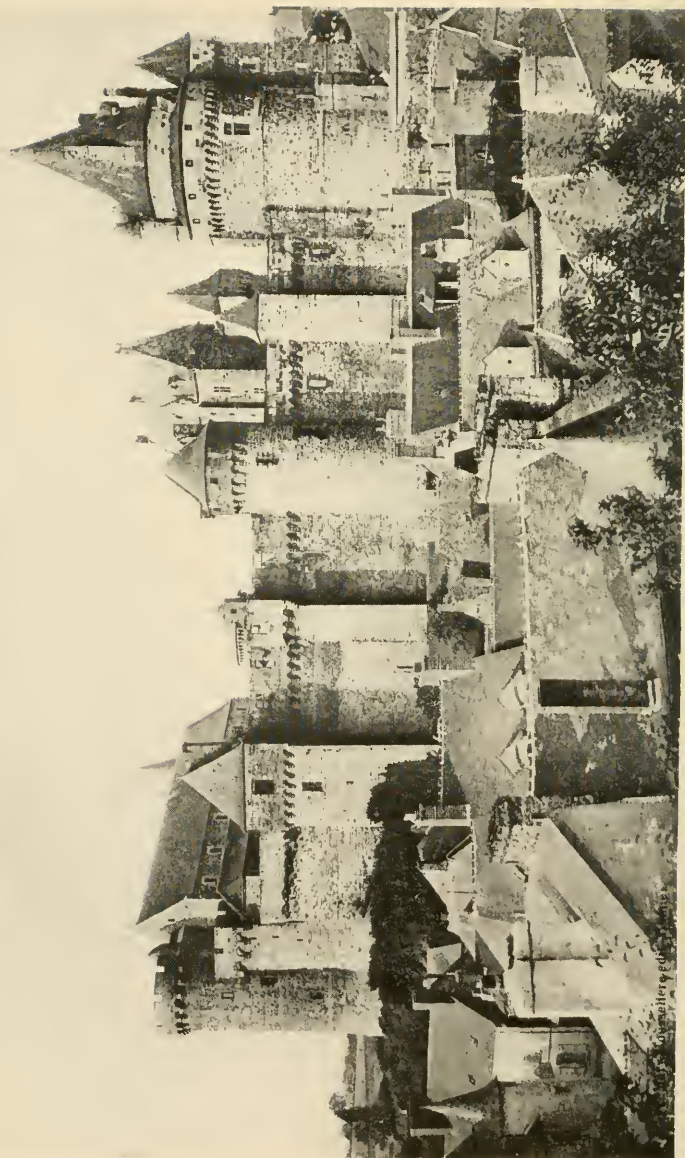
If I remember correctly,
They greeted each shot with a cheer;
And when a torpedo passed our bow,
They gave it a laugh and a sneer.

A few more days of wind and waves,
And we sighted our haven of rest,
With many a happy heart aboard
We entered the Harbor of Brest.

(Aug. 12, 1918)

There we camped and ate our meal
Of bread and sow-belly meat,
And never did chicken or turkey
Ever taste half so sweet.

It was here they split our 111th
Ammunition Train.
Two Companies went to the trenches.
The rest were told to remain.



"CHATEAUX WITH TOWERS TALL."

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Lost from our own Division,
In a strange land left to roam;
To look for some kind Artillery Brigade,
With whom we could make our home.

This was a strange, strange land to us,
With its buildings old and gray.
With winding roads and street latrines
And wooden-shoed children at play.

Little fields and trees so green
And railroad trains so small;
Oxen yoked to wooden carts;
Chateaux with towers tall.

A week at Brest and then once more
We hurried on our way.
We unloaded next at Redon
Upon the following day.

(Aug. 20, 1918)

A five mi'e hike to Fegreac
Where we pitched our puppy tents;
And drank white wine and cider
And learned a little French.

Bon jour, ce soir Madame my dear,
Donnez-moi, s'il vous plait.
Bon soir Mademoiselle, ma chere,
And Parlez-vous Francais.

Five weeks of drill; squads east and west,
And again we hit the road.
A forty mile hike to Loutehel,
With a sixty pound pack for a load.

(Sept. 5, 6, 1918)

It was there we first had billets,
And slept with a roof o'er our head,
And had a place to wash our clothes,
And found some hay for a bed.

Our travels next took us on to Maure,
A town that lay close at hand;
Where we learned that the 61st Brigade
Had adopted our little band.

(Sept. 27, 1918)

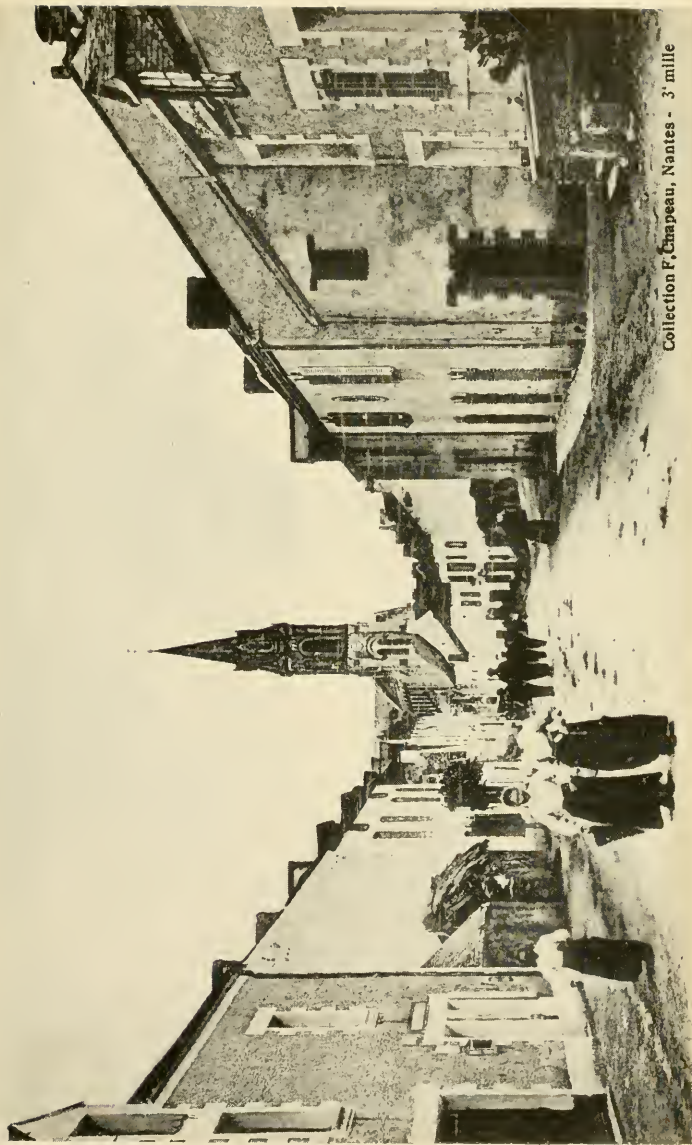
Our duty was to carry
Fodder to the guns,
A sort of high powered fodder
Uncle Sam feeds to the Huns.

The 61st F. A. Brigade
Are the boys who serve the meal,
They have a course of H. E.* shells
That make the Germans squeal.

Back with our own Division again,
We settled down in content,
Waiting for orders to move to the front
From the G. H. Q.† to be sent.

*H. E.—High Explosive.

†G. H. Q.—General Headquarters.



Collection F. Chapeau, Nantes - 3' mille

It was then the world learn'd of the glorious work
Our Infantry boys had done;
Of the smashing advance they made at Rheims,
And the beating they gave the Hun.

Advance three Kilos!* their orders were,
And there to hold the line.
It was twenty-three Ki'os before they stopped.
They were headed for the Rhine.

New to them was the roar of guns,
And new was the sight of death,
But, with the courage of veterans,
They fought to their dying breath.

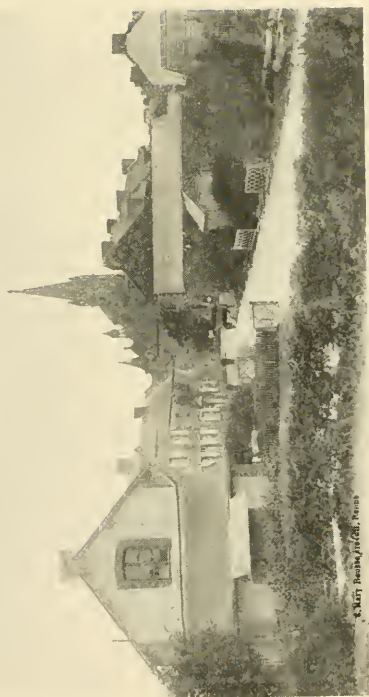
Bravely they faced that withering hail,
The deadly machine gun fire,
And many a boy from the Sunny South
Was left in the mud and the mire.

Gone from their face was that friendly smile,
The soldier has for all,
And in its p'ace was the smile of hate
As they saw their comrades fall.

Comrades who in days gone by
Had marched and slept by their side,
Pierced by the deadly German slugs
Fell with a groan and died.

*Kilometers.

45,7 Maure de Bretagne I et V) — Le passage à niveau et l'artillerie route de Carennot et de Piprie



MAURE, FRANCE.



BILLETS AT LOUTEHEL.



BILLETS AT MAURE.

No human power could stop that charge
To the line where the Germans stood,
The 36th was given its chance
And the 36th made good.

The Regulars called them Rookies
Because they were new at the game.
History will call them Heroes,
And well they deserve the name.

For of such are the men of the 36th,
Raised on the hills and plains
Of Texas and Oklahoma,
Where men have red blood in their veins.

And of such are the men of the A. E. F.;
All of them, great and small,
Born 'neath the g'orious Stars and Stripes,—
The grandest flag of them all.

And now our work is completed.
We have answered our country's call;—
Given the best that is in us,
Made the world safe to live in for all.

The Hun's vicious power is broken;
France has her Alsace-Lorraine:
So we're going home to America,
To our mothers and sweethearts again.

The Adventures of Companies
“C” and “D”
111th Ammunition Train

THE ADVENTURES OF COMPANIES "C" AND "D", 111th AMMUNITION TRAIN.

"At Brest they split our 111th
Ammunition Train.
Two companies went to the trenches,
The rest were told to remain."

To the 13th Training area
Companies "C" and "D" were sent,
In the neighborhood of Baur-Sur-Aube,
Where several weeks were spent.

Fifty trucks were issued to them,
And other equipment, too,
All were in bad condition,
Hard service they'd been through.

There Company "C" their Captain lost,
With a Lieutenant from Company "D,"
Who were sent to attend at Decize, France,
The school of the M. T. C.

The next move was to Flavigny,
Where Ammunition was hauled,
Then to Mellet and Somme-Suippe,
In the next few days they were called.

From Mellet to Dump Bowley,
They went with a whole train load
Of Ammunition for delivery near
Somme-Py on the St. Eteine Road.

24 ADVENTURES OF COMPANIES "C-D"

That night at Bowley the Train arrived,
And through the mud and mire,
Forty-four loaded trucks advanced
Under heavy shell fire.

Not a man of them weakened,
They knew what they had to do.
And straight to its destination
The Ammunition went through.

'Twas here in the darkness of the night,
Without a word or a sound,
Like shadows the Infantry slipped by
For their place in the trenches bound.

A dump in advance of the Infantry
Was established the following day,
At a place northeast of Coulommies,
On No Man's Land it lay.

Before the trucks could drop their load
The enemy spied the Train,
And it seemed like the top of Hell blew off
As the shells began to rain.

A Boche airplane was drifting by
And decided to take a hand,
So she stopped and fired a round or two
O'er the heads of the little band.



A FRENCH TOWN AFTER BOMBARDMENT.

But luck was with the boys that day,
And the Boches aim was bad,
The Ammunition was safely laid
And no casualties were had.

On the St. Etienne Road 'twas first they saw
Their own American dead,
Torn by high explosive shells,
Some without limbs or head.

Scattered along the muddy road,
Their lifeless bodies lay,
Splashed by the mud of passing trucks
That hurriedly passed that way.

Flaming ruins that once were towns,
Now wrecked by the German shell,
Met their gaze as they passed along,
And they realized that war was Hell.

A few more weary days were spent,
Working both day and night,
Hauling rations for regiments
Still at the front in the fight.

At last one day the message came
That the Armistice was signed,
With happy hearts they started out
A near rest camp to find.

At a little town named Ervy,
They finally settled down,
Where all were given billets
In houses near the town.

They had done their duty willingly
And had but one request,
That was, "Let us go back soon
To our home in the Golden West."

The entire Ammunition Train
Is proud of these sturdy men,
Of their excellent record on the Front,
And await their return again.

They upheld the Regiment's honor,
As only brave men can,
And with gratitude our hearts go out
To each and every man.

How It Ended

HOW IT ENDED.

On the 11th of November
The Armistice was signed,
The Germans left Alsace-Lorraine
But left their guns behind.

Then throughout this war-scarred world,
Rejoicing filled the air,
And so our Regiment stepped out
And tried to do their share.

All day long we rang the bells
In the old Cathedral tower,
To make the day a grand success
We did all in our power.

Up and down the streets of Maure
We marched and yelled that night,
French, Americans and all,
Joined hands in wild delight.

'Twas in this little burg we spent
Our first Thanksgiving Day
On foreign soil, it made us think
Of home so far away.

Of roast turkey and dressing
And great big juicy pies,
And many other things like that,
Till tears came to our eyes.



THE CATHEDRAL AT MAURE.



"MOST OF US HAD SLUM."



CAMP COETQUIDAN, FRANCE.



BILLETS AT CAMP COETQUIDAN.

But when you're in the army
You take things as they come,
Some managed for a goose or two
But most of us had slum.*

One day our marching orders came
And we hit the road again,
And headed for Camp Coetquidan
Through sloppy mud and rain.

(Nov. 29, 1918)

Late that night we reached the camp
All muddy tired and wet,
And laid down on the billet floors
A little sleep to get.

For three long cold and dreary months
In this camp we remained,
And nearly every day and night,
It rained, and rained, and rained.

I've heard folks talk of "Sunny France,"
It sounded awfully nice,
But this particular spot in France
Was a mud-hen's paradise.

Little freedom we had here,
In this Artillery Camp,
But spent our time in scraping mud
From clothes and hobnails damp.

*Army stew.

The Y. M. C. A. did their best
To make our life more bright,
With movie shows and vaudeville
And music every night.

Christmas time at last drew near,
And not to be too late,
We started out to find some way
In which to celebrate.

So every Regiment produced
All talent that they could,
And Christmas Day put on a show
That all agreed was good.

With many black comedians,
Male chorus girls galore.
And orchestras and quartets
Like you'd never heard before.

We had a grand old Christmas,
Thanks to the efforts made,
By the willing entertainers
Of the 61st Brigade.

Well, the holidays now over
The same old thoughts returned,
How many days before we'd see
The land for which we yearned.



HEADQUARTERS AT CAMP COETQUIDAN.



SOLDIERS BOARDING TRAIN FOR LEAVE AREA.

And for awhile the dope flew fast,
Some made the declaration
That soon our Regiment would join
The Army of Occupation.

Others said that we would leave,
In just a week or so,
And to the Embarkation Port
Were scheduled soon to go.

At last G. H. Q. promised us
An early quick release,
When transports were available,
And set our minds at peace.

Special leaves were granted then,
And all received a chance
To visit gay old Paris
And other points in France.

The best p'lace was St. Malo,
A city on the sea,
Where soldiers get the best there is,
And everything is free.

An Army Leave Area, it's called,
Where the U. S. A. repays
Its tired and war-worn soldiers
With a rest of seven days.



"ORCHESTRAS AND QUARTETS LIKE YOU'D NEVER HEARD BEFORE."

On the 3rd of January,
The sad news was received
Of the death of General Stephens,
And our loss by all was grieved.

A good Commander he had been,
Of the 61st Brigade,
Loved by his entire command,
Fast friends of all he'd made.

He rests now in his last long sleep,
'Midst other comrades brave,
Far from his own dear native land,
He found a soldier's grave.

And so it is in this strange life,
A time must come to all,
No matter what your rank may be,
You answer death's last call.

At last inspection day arrived,
The last one in this land,
Before we leave the A. E. F.,
Each soldier has to stand.

Inspection of equipment,
And a physical for each one,
They put us through for three hard days
Before the job was done.

And then a drill inspection
Of the whole Brigade came last,
And with a grade of excellent,
Each Regiment was passed.

All surplus of equipment
To the Q. M. was returned,
And the rolling and construction
Of the "model pack" was learned.

For weeks we drilled and waited
Till instructions came again,
Which ordered that three Regiments
Immediately entrain.

Next morning we cleared the Camp,
For a railroad station near,
And loaded into boxcars,
At a little town named Guer.

(Feb. 21, 1919)

8 Chevaux or 40 Hommes,*
Was our style of coach that day,
And the men all mooed like cattle
As they crawled into the hay.

We entered late that evening,
The town of St. Nazaire,
And marched out to Camp No. 2,
A few kilos from there.

* French box cars are marked 8 horses or 40 men, showing capacity.



RENNES, FRANCE, WHERE MANY SOLDIERS VISITED.



ST. MALO, OUR LEAVE AREA.

Through physical inspection,
For disease and lice we went,
And a few unfortunate soldiers
To the hospital were sent.

The process of delousing us
Was next upon the list,
So well were we decootyized
That not a one was missed.

We all went to a bathroom,
A good hot bath to take,
While to the sterilizer
Our clothes were sent to bake.

Then in an isolation camp,
A few more days were spent,
While our records for inspection
To Camp Headquarters went.

A first-class embarkation camp
They had at St. Nazaire,
The food was good, the billets clean,
And we were treated fair.

At last the joyful news arrived,
Upon the following day,
Our ship was in condition
To be upon her way.



"8 CHEVAUX OR 40 HOMMES" BOX CARS.



A STREET IN ST. NAZAIRE, FRANCE.

The following morn, on March the 1st,
As up the plank we passed,
Each one gave a happy sigh,
"We're Homeward Bound at Last."

Headed for the Golden West,
We took one parting glance,
And bid farewell forever,
To the fading shores of France.

The troop restrictions transports have,
We stood without a fuss,
How long it took to get across,
Was all that worried us.

So steadily we pushed along,
Through days of calm and storm,
Through misty days as cold as ice,
And others bright and warm.

One day the waves were running high,
And tossed the ship around,
'Twas meal time, and beneath the deck,
Arose an awful sound.

'Twas just the soldiers learning how
To walk a slippery deck,
And pack a mess-kit full of beans
And never break their neck,



CAMP NO. 2, ST. NAZAIRE.



THE LAST WE SAW OF FRANCE.

Soup and beans and Irish stew
And coffee filled the air,
Many had a good square meal
Spilled on their clothes and hair.

It's awfully hard to walk a floor
That rocks from side to side,
And hold a mess-kit fu'l of slum,
I know, because I've tried.

One day the old Atlantic
Gave us a little treat,
She sent an 83-mile gale,
That blew us off our feet.

For 24 long, weary hours
We faced its mighty force,
But steadily it blew us back
For miles from off our course.

Waves that looked like mountains
Came rushing o'er our ship,
Till we commenced to think it was
The finish of our trip.

For with your feet upon firm land
It's easy to be brave,
But for a tombstone few would choose
A cold and icy wave.

The following morning found us safe,
With everyone on hand,
All dangers of the past forgot
And looking out for land.

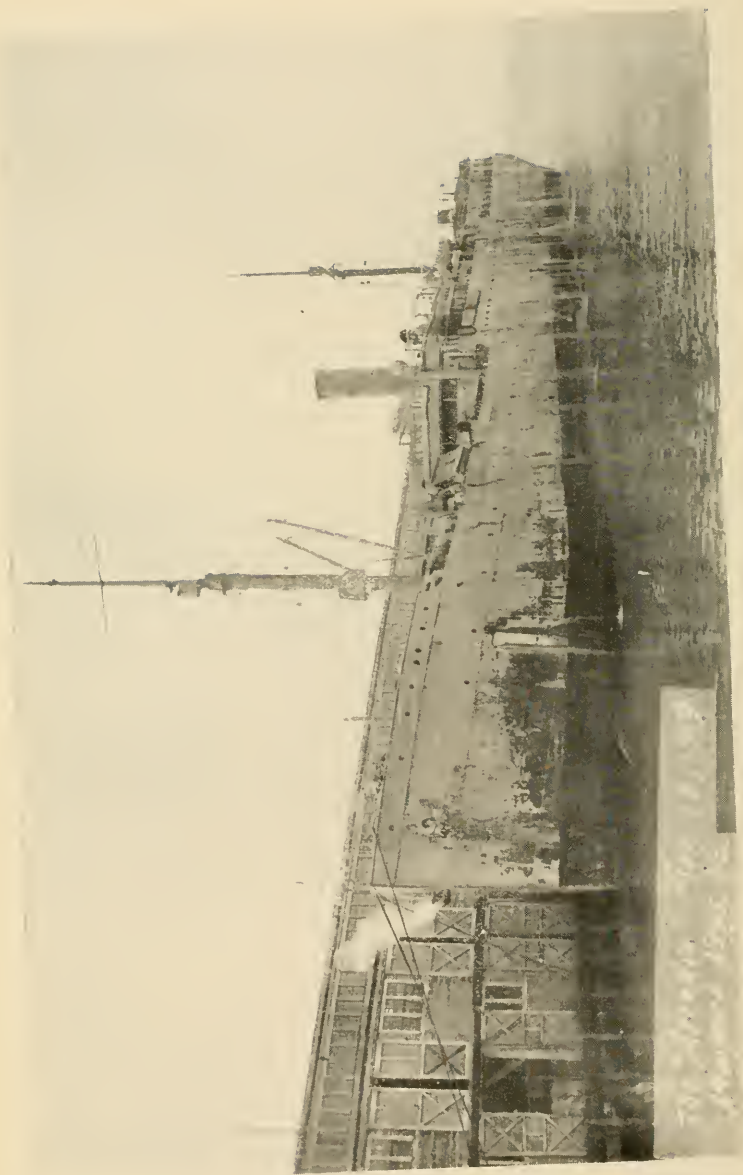
March the 17th it was,
When on the deck we piled,
As some one shouted "Land Ahead,"
And then the bunch went wild.

Long had we waited for this day,
We'd seen it in our dreams,
And every soldier yelled with joy,
Like a Texas Panther screams.

Next morning on American soil,
We placed our homesick feet,
At Newport News, Virginia,
And paraded down the street.

And there among the greeting crowds,
With happy faces stood
A lot of real American girls,
Oh Boy! They sure looked good.

American newspapers, all,
Have made an awful noise,
About the French girls stealing hearts
Of U. S. soldier boys.



THE SHIP THAT BROUGHT US HOME.



BOARDING THE TRANSPORT.



ON BOARD THE TRANSPORT.

Ask each returning "Khaki Clad,"
How much of that is true
And they will help you change your mind
Before the job is through.

'Tis true, there is a light that shines
In every woman's eyes.
That makes a fellow's heart beat fast,
Though French or otherwise.

But in your eyes there shines a light,
That we can understand,
And keeps our hearts still true to you,
Girls of our native land.

A short hike to Camp Stuart,
For four days there we stayed,
A trip through the delouser,
Then everyone was paid.

And paid in real U. S. greenbacks,
No soap wrappers were they,
Like money we had used in France,
Since we had been away.

The money didn't last us long,
We saw too much to buy,
And spent it all for ham and eggs,
And candy, cake and pie.



AS SOME ONE SHOUTED "LAND AHEAD."



THE FIRST WE SAW OF AMERICA.

An awful run was made upon,
The stock of new tan shoes,
New uniforms and souvenirs,
We bought at Newport News.

The 22nd day of March,
We loaded on the train,
For old Camp Bowie, Texas,
And Fort Worth, once again.

And every town along the road,
Each one without exception,
Welcomed us back home again,
With a hearty glad reception.

But Oklahoma beat them all,
In hospitality,
'Twas plain to see American
Was her nationality.

If we'd accepted all requests
That were received to stay,
No doubt the Ammunition Train
Wou'd be there to this day.

McAlester gave us a feed,
Of chicken, pie and cake,
And everybody ate so much
They had the stomach ache,

(March 24, 1919)



CAMP STUART, NEWPORT NEWS, VA.



THE TRAIN THAT TOOK US TO CAMP BOWIE.

At Oklahoma City
They took us by surprise,
And kidnapped every one of us,
Before the Colonel's eyes.

(March 25, 1919)

Each family grabbed a soldier boy,
And wouldn't let him go
Till they had fed and tucked him in
A bed as white as snow.

We then paraded through the town,
Upon the following day,
And bidding all a fond farewell,
We sped upon our way.

Next morn' on piling out of bed,
As soon as it was light,
We found our train had finally reached
Camp Bowie in the night.

(March 26, 1919)

Then came those "Army Angels,"
The dear old Red Cross Girls,
With rosy cheeks and laughing eyes,
And teeth as white as pearls.

And each one with a basket full
Of things to smoke or eat,
The best friends that a soldier has,
These Red Cross Girls so sweet.



RECEPTION OF TROOPS ALONG THE ROAD.

Back in Camp Bowie once again,
'Twas too good to be true,
The war, the trials of army life,
And all at last were through.

It is back to Camp Bowie,
We've returned from our trip to France,
And we'll swap our Khaki breeches
For some new Civilian pants.

And yet in all our happiness,
The thoughts came to our mind,
Of those who went with us to France,
But now were left behind.

The boys back on the battlefield,
Who ne'er again would see
The loved ones they had parted with,
To die for Liberty.

The Great Commanding Officer,
In Heaven's Camp of Rest,
Has blown the call to quarters
For soldiers He loves best.

Well, everyone has gone away,
Discharged today and free,
And I am left here all alone,
As lonesome as can be.

(March 31, 1919)

The freedom I've been wishing for,
So long, is mine again,
No Reveille tomorrow morn,
No Taps tonight at ten.

And yet, somehow, I'm not so glad,
As I once thought I'd be,
I miss that jolly bunch of boys
Who were so dear to me.

I miss the mess-kits rattling
Whenever "Soupie" blew,
The mad rush for the mess line
To get our beans and stew.

I miss the comradeship of men
Who didn't know or care,
But that each day might be the last
That they'd see "Over There."

I miss the great big generous hearts
Of men who were as brothers,
And willingly would give their lives
To save the lives of others.

And when at last the day was done,
And to our bunks we'd go,
I miss the friendly "Goodnight, Boy,"
When sleepy Taps would blow.

But each one with a happy heart,
Has left for home at last,
And all that there is left to me
Are memories of the past.

So this is "How It Ended,"
The best I can explain,
And now I close my History,
Of the Ammunition Train.

THE END.

Short Poems of Army Life

UNCLE SAM'S NEW ARMY.

Uncle Sam got sore one day
And to the Kaiser wrote,
"I'll raise a mighty army
That will get your Royal Goat."

He called his folks together
And decided on a plan,
To raise this mighty army
And whip the Allemand.

He organized the Infantry,
Artillery galore.
And soon he had an army
Like he'd never had before.

Old England and her allies
With their transports lent a hand,
It wasn't long till the A. E. F.,
In France commenced to land.

First came "Black Jack" Pershing,
With a Regiment or so,
And in the following months
You should see that army grow.

The Kaiser said we couldn't fight,
We didn't have the snap,
At Chateau-Thierry they tried us out
And we ran them off the map.

At St. Mihiel, Cantigny,
And many places more,
We showed them Stars and Stripes,
That they'd never seen before.

And when the Armistice was signed,
Old Bill had to admit,
The boys they call the A. E. F.,
Sure gave his Huns a fit.

THE KP's LAMENT.

I just got back from "AWOL,"*
Where I went last night would be hard to tell,
We had plenty of wine and were happy and gay
But I'm feeling very ill today.

The Captain told me he thought it was best,
That he put me on KP,† under arrest,
So now I am scrubbing pots and pans,
And stirring the beans and opening cans.

No matter how bad may be your case,
You could a'ways be in a much worse place,
I might be under guard in the Mill,‡
But I'm here in the kitchen eating my fill.

So I'll play KP and keep off the rum,
And serve the beans and coffee and slum,
No more will I go "AWOL,"
But be a good KP and cut out the Hell.

*AWOL—Absent without leave.

†KP—Kitchen police.

‡Mill—Guard house.



THE COMPANY KITCHEN FORCE.

There is Jiggs and Armie and Holzie and me,
Three of us cooks and one KP,
The hardest bunch you ever did see,
Is the Company Kitchen Force.
We can cook a meal of beans and slum
That will make the Major hurry and come
And eat his fill and take back some,
And he's welcome to do it, of course.

On mornings Jiggs is first to trot,
Down to the kitchen and put on the pot,
Build the fire, make the coffee hot,
And a couple of jobs or so.
Then Holzie and Armie wander down,
And fry the bacon until it is brown,
And sit and wait for me with a frown
Until to breakfast I go.

Cooks are hard as hard can be,
Because I am just a plain KP,
They sure do like to pick on me,
If I lay late in bed.
I wipe the dishes, empty the slop,
All day they keep me on the hop,
It's worse than going over the top
To keep the Company fed.

Armie starts the potato drill,
He must have learned it in the Mill,
And Jiggs the slum can starts to fill
As soon as breakfast is through.
We mix some good corn-willie hash,
A bucket of boiled potatoes mash,
And cook a meal as quick as a flash,
To serve the hungry crew.

And when the bunch comes running in,
That is when our troubles begin,
They rob us of every plate and tin,
And spoons and forks and knives.
The butter and milk we have to guard,
And even the bread and bacon and lard,
It sure does make KP'ing hard,
We live in fear of our lives.

And then they crab and grouch and growl,
Even cuss and sometimes howl,
Because we refuse to furnish a towel,
To wipe their mess-kits dry.
That is the reason we are hard-boiled,
Our clothes with grease and dirt are soiled,
And our dispositions are nearly spoiled,
And still they wonder, Why!

THE GOLDBRICK STANDS INSPECTION.

There is trouble in the air,
Soldiers busy everywhere,
I wonder what makes them act that way,
I think I have a hunch,
From the actions of the bunch,
There's a show-down inspection due today.

I wish they'd let me rest,
I should worry how I'm dressed,
These inspections keep a man upon the run,
My equipment I must find,
If I don't I'll be confined,
It has been a week since I have cleaned my gun.

Oh, the worry and the strain,
Upon my wearied brain,
I wonder where my "OD"* shirt can be.
A pair of socks are missing,
It sure does keep me guessing
Keeping up with my equipment "C."†

Hobnails must be well oiled,
My uniform unsoiled,
And I've only got an hour to get them clean
It will take all day and night
To clean my rifle right,
And I know the C. O.'s eyes are mighty keen.

*OD - Olive Drab.

†Soldiers' equipment is classified as A, B or C, according to the number of articles received.

My mess-kit is a wreck,
I will get it in the neck,
There is rust upon my knife and fork and spoon.
Well, I'll take another chance,
They may pass without a glance,
I hope the war is over pretty soon.

The "Top" has called us out,
"Inspection Arms," I hear him shout,
And up my back there slowly creeps a chill.
The C. O. takes my gun,
My confinement has begun,
Now I'm serving my enlistment in the Mill.

THE ARMY HOBNAIL SHOES.

Hobnails, you've queered yourself with me,
I'm off of you for life,
You've caused my precious feet to be,
A never ending strife.

Since trustingly I put my feet
In your protecting charge,
The way they've grown has got me beat.
How could they get so large?

Why, I can still recall the day
Before I ever knew,
My little feet would ever lay
Within a hobnail shoe.

When I could wear a number six,
And it would fit me fine,
But now I'm in an awful fix,
I wear a number nine.

When I go home, how can I wear
Those new civilian shoes,
They'll give my feet, when I get there,
The Army hobnail blues.



THE U. S. A. IS DRY.

All through the Camp I hear a sound
Of grief and sorrow all around,
With drooping heads bowed to the ground,
They loudly cuss and cry.
Oh, tell me, friends, and tell me quick,
Is someone dead, or someone sick?
They answer me with accents thick:
"The U. S. A. is dry."

We got the message here today,
And this is what the "Pro-hies" say,
"No more cold beer will come your way,
When you come marching home.
Soldiers, we your souls must save
From a drunkard's early grave,
No matter, boys, how much you crave
The glass that's topped with foam."

So now, by gum, I'm cussing too,
With drooping head and feeling blue,
Just like the other fellows do,
With sorely troubled mind.
I'm thinking of the day I'll land
Upon my country's distant strand
With tongue as rough and dry as sand,
No barroom will I find.

Frenchman, I've a word to say,
Work your breweries night and day,
Because, before we go away
We're going to drink them dry.
We've got to drink enough to last
Till prohibition days are past,
Our time is short, so make it fast,
For "More Beer" is our cry.

TO THE MEMORY OF GENERAL STEPHENS.

COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE 61ST BRIGADE,
36TH DIVISION.

A funeral march with deep and mournful sound
Is drifting through the cold and misty air,
Slowly across Camp Coetquidan's damp ground
A column of Olive Drab is passing there.

With them the last remains has passed,
Of him who has commanded our brigade,
In our midst the General breathed his last
And in our midst his body will be laid.

When first he left his country's distant shore,
If death should come to him in this strange land,
So noble a soldier had dreamed a death before
The roaring guns, the enemy's last stand.

And there passing with other noble souls,
The majestic pageant of battle o'er the land,
From where the murky cloud of battle rolls,
To his Creator, Victories' laurels in his hand.

At his post of duty here to him assigned,
Faithfully he served as a faithful soldier should,
Though eager a station on the front to find,
True to his command, his country's flag he stood.

Now in his last long sleep he's laid to rest,
'Midst soldier comrades, a royal honor guard,
God's decision, He has thought it best,
By His decision we abide, however hard.

General, we who are about to leave,
For that blessed country far across the sea,
Leave you with happy hearts, we do not grieve,
We know returning, your soul with us will be.

THE GIRL THAT I LEFT BEHIND.

There's a day in my life of pleasure and strife
That I will never forget,
And that is the day, in the Old U. S. A.,
When the Only Girl I first met.

She was gay as a lark, and kindled a spark
That forever will burn in my heart,
She was my purest thought, long for her I had
sought,
And never from her could I part.

Her hair, golden brown, like a shimmering
crown,
Spread a halo of light 'round her head,
And her eyes, clear and blue, seem to say, "I'll
be true,"
As I kissed her sweet lips so red.

We were married one day, and I took her away
To a little cottage for two,
Where we lived in content, days of happiness
spent,
As all young married folks do.

One day came a call, 'twas a message for all,
For their flag and country to fight,
So the Old World might be, both on land and on
sea,
Safe for the cause of the right.

“There’s but one thing to do,” said my wife,
 brave and true,
And she bid me farewell with a smile,
So I left her one day and to France sailed away,
With the boys of the rank and the file.

Months have now passed since I saw her last,
But her letters have filled me with cheer,
When the shrapnel and shell turn the night into
 hell,
She helps me face death without fear.

At night on my post, it seems that her ghost
Comes to me with a face sweet and sad,
’Round my neck rests her arm, and I feel safe
 from harm,
And forget all the troubles I’ve had.

Some day when the Hun has been whipped and
 we’re done,
And the Treaty of Peace is signed,
I’ll return to the West, to the land I love best,
And the Girl That I Left Behind.

THE LITTLE SERVICE STRIPE OF GOLD.*

I received a gift today,
So I am feeling gay,
And it is from Old Uncle Sam I'm told.
To you it may seem queer,
That I should hold it dear,
It's just a little service stripe of gold.

When its golden gleam I see,
Great contentment comes to me,
It shows my country knows what I've been
through.

And I feel that I'm repaid
For the many months I've stayed,
In France, to serve the old Red, White and Blue.

I have no Croix-de-Guerre,
To show my lack of fear,
In facing death in deeds both brave and bold.
No. D. S. C. have I,
But I went to fight or die,
Or I'd not have this service stripe of gold.

It brings thoughts to my mind,
Of the home I left behind,
Of long and weary hikes through mud and rain,
Of days when death was near,
When the cannon's roar I'd hear,
And wonder if I'd e'er see home again.

Homefolks, tell me why,
The soldiers you'd deny ,
This little token we so dearly hold.
Before you answer, pause,
And think, 'twas in your cause
We earned our little service stripe of gold.

*Written at the time Congress was considering the discontinuation of the Gold Service Stripe for Overseas Soldiers.



LITTLE BOBBIE.

LITTLE BOBBIE.

(To My Son)

Little Bobbie goes to school
So that he won't be a fool,
When he grows to be a man,
He can do what others can.

There he learns his A B C,
He's as smart as he can be,
If you knew him you would know
What I'm telling you is so.

Little Bobbie likes to fight,
That little kid is sure a fright,
Sometimes he has a bloody nose,
And even sometimes tears his clothes.

But, listen Bobbie, don't be bad,
It makes your poor old Daddy sad,
When he learns that you won't do
What your mother tells you to.

Some day when the war is done,
And I return from France, my son,
If you've been good then we will go
To a moving picture show.

I will bring a souvenir,
And picture cards from "Over Here,"
And tell you lots of stories too,
There's lots of things we will do.

It sure does seem a long, long time
Since on my knee you used to climb,
And gently whisper in my ear,
“Just one nickle, Daddy dear.”

A thousand nickles new and bright,
I'd give if you were here tonight.
I'm 'fraid you wouldn't want to stay,
Because it rains the livelong day.

We'll be patient, there's a day,
When westward I'll be on my way,
When I will hear that joyful sound,
The transport's whistle, “Homeward Bound!”

SOMEDAY.

I'm looking forward to a day,
When I land in the U. S. A.,
And jump aboard a railroad train,
Back to my home town again.

And step in at a certain door,
Throw my pack upon the floor.
And holler, "Mother, come here quick;
Your son is back, and feeling sick.

"And I am liable to stay ill
Till this prescription you can fill,
Fry six chickens young and fat,
While I take off my coat and hat.

"Mashed potatoes in a pail,
Milk and butter without fail,
Bring some biscuits, jelly, too,
One pot of coffee, hot, will do.

"Next, I'll take an apple pie,
And after that, if I don't die,
A tub of ice cream, for your son."
I think by that time I'll be done.

Then a good hot bath I'll take,
And for my bedroom make a break,
And on a real bed take a flop
And sleep a week before I stop.

I'll lay my hobnails by my bed
And knock the first one on the head,
Who sticks his face in at the door,
And hollers, "You Can't Sleep No More."

WHEN ARE WE GOING HOME.

One day I started out to find
 A little news to ease my mind,
 Some news on which I could depend,
 And so I hailed a passing friend.

"Say, Pardner, tell me do you know
 About what day we're due to go,
 Down to the Embarkation Port
 And board a homeward bound transport?"

Said he, "My friend, I heard today,
 The Colonel's own Dog-Robber* say,
 That he had heard the Colonel state
 That Friday was our sailing date.

"And so if what he says is true,
 Our stay in France will soon be through,
 We'll shake that off without a squeak,
 And make the port sometime next week."

So then I stopped another bird
 And told to him what I'd just heard,
 And asked him what he had to say
 About when we would go away.

Then he replied, and dropped a tear,
 "That sounds good, but you're wrong, I fear,
 And I'm afraid there is no hope,
 For I have some Official dope.

*Officers' orderly.

"I've got a Corporal friend who said
He had a personal friend named 'Red,'
At Headquarters on orderly,
And this is what he heard 'Red,' say:

" An order came in yesterday
That our whole Regiment would stay,
We're Occupation Army bound,
And that's the latest dope I've found."

And so each one had something new,
About what we were going to do,
And it got harder to believe
The dope on when we're going to leave.

So I've about made up my mind,
Believe no news of any kind,
Until I hear that joyful sound,
The transport's whistle, "Homeward Bound."

HOME, THAT'S ALL I WANT.

Since the Armistice is signed,
There's only one thing on my mind,
And that thing is, "When do we go
Back home," that's what I want to know.

While the war was in full sway,
I was satisfied to stay,
And help clean up the "Bloody Hun,"
But now that little job is done.

Home looks awfully good to me,
And that is where I want to be,
The fighting's over on the front
So send me home, that's all I want.

FAREWELL DINNER IN FRANCE

given by the

HEADQUARTERS MOTOR BATTALION

111th Ammunition Train

In honor of

MAJOR GEORGE W. SPOONER

Commanding Officer, Motor Bn., 111th Am. Tn.
and

CAPTAIN T. J. FITZGERALD

Adjutant and Commanding Officer of the
Headquarters Detachment, Motor Bn.,
111th Ammunition Train.

January 19th, 1919.

Camp Coetquidan, France.

Major and Captain, we offer to you
Best wishes from all, and our friendship true,
Your old detachment is all here tonight
And wishes to prove that their hearts are alright.

May the pleasure we have on this happy eve,
Be only equalled the day that we leave
To board the transport at old St. Nazaire,
So we drink to your luck and the day we'll be
there.

The chicken you'll find is tender and fat,
And in frying potatoes the French take the hat,
The salad of season will make you forget
Of any past salads that you've eaten yet.

The cake with cream will speak for itself
It's fresh from the oven and not from the shelf,
And after the coffee we'll turn to the wine,
It's not the best brand, but it surely is fine.

The best brand, we'll admit, is made from the
 hop,
Back in the U. S., and it has foam on top,
Do the best that you can, though, and try to
 forget,
Drink French wine, but smoke a U. S. cigarette.

This little banquet is only to show
Our good will toward you before we must go
To that beautiful country far over the sea,
The country we love, the Land of the Free.

Your detachment salutes you, may you never
 forget
We men of the army who tonight here have met,
And when at events of the past you may glance,
Remember our "Farewell Dinner in France."

THE U. S. S. ARCADIA.

The U. S. S. Arcadia,
Went sailing out to sea,
A thousand soldier boys aboard,
A proud old ship was she.

She resembled the Leviathan,
(In a few ways) you can bet,
She had a skipper and a crew
And her bottom it was wet.

She also had a record,
And holds it to this day,
She never yet has passed a ship
A-sailing on her way.

And when the question comes to age,
Arcadia wins the cup,
Why, she had long since passed her prime
When Cæsar was a pup.

Germany is her Daddy,
But she is anti-Hun,
And joined the U. S. Navy,
When first the war begun.

Although her hull is old and cracked,
Her heart is strong and stout,
She says she'll haul the soldiers home
Till her bottom has dropped out.

So keep the good work up, old girl,
We're with you to a man,
And everyone you've got aboard
Will help you all they can.

You have a true blue crew aboard,
Of boys who did their part,
And helped to put the fear of God
In the Kaiser's cowardly heart.

And this, Arcadia, bear in mind,
As long as you can float,
You'll always fly the Stars and Stripes,
You're a U. S. Navy Boat.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT.

Since to Army Life I've turned
There are lots of things I've learned,
So many, many things I never knew,
And the strangest to my mind,
On a transport you will find,
The list of things you're not allowed to do.

From the Port of Embarkation
To your final destination,
You hear the constant song, "You can't do that,"
Till you're 'fraid to take a breath,
And you're nearly scared to death,
It makes a fellow nervous as a cat.

The very day you leave,
This long list you receive,
As you climb the gang plank with a beating
heart.

'Twill take a month, you'll find,
To commit it all to mind,
So only learn the most important part.

Anything you'd like to do,
It is "SOL"† for you,
It's the very thing that strictly "Can't be done,"
Don't let that bother you,
Before the voyage is through,
You'll be cussing everyone beneath the sun.

†Expression used in the Army, meaning disappointment—
"Soldier Out of Luck."

On a cold and rainy day,
When below you'd like to stay,
Quickly to the upper deck you go,
But when the sun is out,
And it's pretty all about,
Well, be careful or you may be sent below.

If a smoke you'd like to take,
I'd advise for safety sake,
First get your list and carefully read it through.
If some candy you would eat,
Pray don't be indiscreet,
But get permission first before you do.

The most delightful part,
Are the meals served a la carte,
Of beans and slum and such delicious food.
Two hours we stand in line,
E'er we're allowed to dine,
We need the discipline to keep subdued.

If it wasn't for the crew,
I don't know what we'd do,
The most of them you'll find have got a heart.
Their friendship, you can bet,
We never will forget,
And regret the day when from them we must
part.

But patient men are we,
As enlisted men should be,
And stand all such restrictions with a smile,
For now the war is won,
Our enlistment soon is done,
And we will be civilians after while.

When I go back to stay,
In the dear old U. S. A.,
And swap my Khaki for civilian clothes,
I'll knock the first one flat,
Who says, "You can't do that,"
An undertaker's shop is where he goes.





WERT
BOOKBINDING
Grantville, Pa
Nov-Dec 1988
We're Quality Bound

